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[P. 456-A) Teklum

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632 It is in the context of these structural divisions that social change and its behavioral indices must be analyzed.

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182 Homicide—an act viewed as a delict in national Mexican law—has in the past two decades become an accepted strategy in social interaction. It is part of the expectations of the society upon which members predicate their own code of behavior and in terms of which
[626] they react to others. Gossip not only fails to
• [521] suppress homicide, but serves to create a consensual base for condoning it. The corpse is re-
[764] ferred to as "the one who had the guilt," *?a stuket smul*, and even when knowledge of the particular act is lacking, certain assumptions are made: the killer was someone in the community; the victim provoked the killer. In listing crimes, informants sometimes failed to
682 mention killing, or they included it after witch-
674 craft, theft, or adultery. Homicide is con-
[124] sidered a *reaction* to crime, not a crime in itself.

The rate is phenomenally high—up to 251.2 per 100,000 (when adjusted to bring the whole township's population of a little over 3,000 to the base for measuring international rates)—and it is increasing. This compares with national rates of 4.8 for the United States, 31.9 for Mexico (United Nations Demographic Yearbook 1964), and 36.2 for a nearby town (Favre 1964).

The following tabulation summarizes the homicides by decades since 1915, the earliest date for which records are available.

1915–1924	4
1925–1934	5
1935–1944	19
1945–1954	9
1955–1964	35

[114) Figures prior to 1950 are not apt to be accurate, for only since that time have there been adequate reporting and checking of township records. In the following tabulation, the marked increase in the annual number of homicides since 1960 represents a real increase.

1950	1	1958	1
1951	0	1959	1
1952	1	1960	4
1953	1	1961	7
1954	1	1962	6
1955	0	1963	7
1956	1	1964	4
1957	4	1965	9

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121 In order to assess the meaning of its remarkable increase during the 1960's, I have pro-

3:Nash E-5 (1964-1965)1967
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682 683 627 to who did it. The consultations with curers prior to the death of the supposed victims of a witch will be introduced as evidence. (Some degree of consensus may have been built up beforehand, in witch-killings, by the public broadcast of accusations noted above.[9]) The focus of the discussion is not so much on who killed the dead man, but whether he was indeed a witch. This kind of mock trial occurs after every funeral, since it must be decided [753] who caused the sickness. Emotions run very [152] high as the liquor is passed around, and accusa- [273] tions are made, sometimes against those present. It was after a funeral that one man killed his son (not included in Table 1) for accusing him of having caused the death of the son's child, who was being buried.

682 In the weeks following a homicide, it is dis- [52] cussed at all the drinking sessions in the homes or in the town hall. Eventually an authoritative version begins to emerge. Those who have defended the victim then keep silent, and the affair "rests in peace." Avenging the death of a 682 man judged to have been a witch, so far as I 683 know, has never been done. In one case (no. 36, [627] Table 1) the widow of a man killed as a witch vigorously denied the legitimacy of the act and built up a case against the killer. She spread word that it was without doubt the dead man's son by a prior marriage. When the son was killed shortly after (case 37, Table 1), everyone assumed that he had been killed by the widow's son by *her* prior marriage. However, the authoritative version concerning the second killing was that it was an accident: he had been mistaken for his brother, whom the killer was after because of rivalry over a girl.

682 183 *Rules for Surviving*

The patterning of the selection of victims and the circumstances of homicide provide the basis for formulating a set of rules that can 682 ensure survival. The long-range rules of sur- 539 vival, in the words of an elder at the occasion of 183 the death of his godchild, are:

lekon kak'o ta kwenta me?tal
I pay respect to my elders.

[601] *hun ku kilitz'in kalnilan*
I greet my younger brothers and my children (classificatory extension of kinship terms).

spisil kak' ta kwenta
To all I give respect.

ha? hil lekotik. Ma taltik milel ma taltik tamel